

## Implement a fish rescue operation

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### Overview

This standard is about implementing a fish rescue operation to remove fish from danger. This is usually achieved by using a combination of electrofishing and netting to safely capture and relocate fish. Once fish are caught, they are temporarily held and then transferred to an agreed location.

The standard also includes setting up the fishing area and preparing the electrofishing equipment together with the nets and the holding units used to hold and transfer live fish.

There is sometimes a need to lower water levels to assist with fish rescue.

This standard requires that you carry out work safely, in line with the relevant legal and health and safety requirements, and that you work to maintain biosecurity and minimise environmental disturbance at all times.

The relevant legislation controlling the application of this standard will vary depending on the location of the fishery – in England, Wales, Northern Ireland or Scotland.

## Performance criteria

### *You must be able to:*

1. carry out all the activities required to safely implement a fish rescue operation in line with relevant health and safety requirements
2. select and use appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) for the work
3. clarify the requirements for the fish rescue operation
4. assess the water conditions (i.e. visibility, water flow, depth) to determine the most appropriate fish-catching methods to employ
5. prepare and maintain fish-catching equipment to the required standard
6. prepare the fishing area to facilitate fish rescue and minimise fish escapes
7. prepare suitable fish holding units to receive and maintain the condition of captured fish, including providing aeration where required
8. undertake a risk assessment to determine if it is safe to electrofish
9. confirm that the relevant licences/permits to carry out electrofishing are in place before commencing the activity
10. use fish-catching equipment safely to capture, but not harm, the fish
11. handle captured fish in a manner that minimises stress
12. establish the fish safely in fish-holding units
13. monitor and observe the fish and report signs of stress, disorder or abnormality to the appropriate person
14. maintain effective communication with all those involved in the fish rescue operation
15. report any problems with the fish rescue operation to the appropriate person
16. sterilise and store fish-catching equipment after use, in accordance with fishery and legal requirements
17. maintain suitable levels of biosecurity when catching fish

## Knowledge and understanding

### *You need to know and understand:*

1. the relevant health and safety requirements associated with fish rescue and the use of electrofishing
2. the importance of using the correct personal protective equipment (PPE)
3. the relevant legal fish-catching methods and the different situations where they may be applied
4. how to determine the most appropriate fish-catching method for the fish being rescued and the water conditions
5. how to prepare and maintain appropriate fish-catching equipment in a safe operating condition
6. how the area should be prepared to facilitate fish rescue and minimise fish escapes
7. how to select and prepare suitable holding units
8. how to carry out a risk assessment to determine if it is safe to use electrofishing to catch fish
9. the correct licences/permits required to carry out electrofishing
10. why it is important to the electrofishing process to have sight of all the people involved in the electrofishing activity
11. water conductivity and its importance to the setup and effective use of electrofishing equipment
12. why it is important to remove fish quickly from the electric field when using electrofishing
13. how and when fish-catching equipment can damage fish
14. how to handle captured fish and establish them safely in the holding units
15. when holding units require aeration and how this can be provided
16. how to recognise signs of stress, disorder or abnormality in captured fish
17. the importance of maintaining communication during a fish rescue and the best way to do this
18. the importance of biosecurity and its role in minimising risks during fish rescue and relocation

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**Relevant Occupations** Ghillie, Angling Guide, Fishery Manager, Senior Fishery Manager

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**Suite** Fisheries Management, Incident Management in the Land-based Sector

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